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MEDIA ADVISORY FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Medfly Situation Declared Over: Arizona Trapping Efforts Continue Through October, As A Precaution

(Phoenix) -- Nearly a year after finding Mediterranean fruitflies in the municipality of Tijuana, Mexico, the United States Department of Agriculture is lifting restrictions on host material (citrus and soft fleshed fruits, such as figs and peaches) coming from the area and destined for the U.S. This will allow these materials to move more quickly through Arizona's international ports of entry by not requiring such stringent regulations to protect Arizona from this pest.

It has been determined that Medflies are no longer a threat because three life cycles have passed, since the last fly was found. However, the Arizona Department of Agriculture will continue its trapping program through October, as a precautionary measure.

This pest had the potential to disrupt Arizona's exports, should it have been found inside Arizona. The following is a chronology of the key events, from the initial finding to today.

On September 16, 2004, 10 adult males (Medfly) were found in the municipality of Tijuana, Mexico.

On September 17, 2004, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service implemented emergency interim measures to mitigate the risk associated with Medfly host materials entering the United States from Mexico.

On September 17, 2005, officials with the Arizona Department of Agriculture requested the United States Department of Agriculture restrict certain commodities from Tijuana, Mexico and surrounding areas from entering Arizona that are known to host the pests, so as to protect our state from these devastating flies.

On September 20, 2004, APHIS expanded its emergency interim measures for commercial shipments to include additional ports of entry in the following states: Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas, for border ports west of and including El Paso.

On September 24, 2004, Governor Janet Napolitano declared a State of Emergency within Arizona. This declaration also provided \$200,000 to the Arizona Department of Agriculture to support early detection

activities for this pest. Subsequently, the United States Department of Agriculture issued matching funds in the amount of \$200,000.

On September 24, 2004 the Arizona Department of Agriculture began inspecting street vendors from Yuma to San Luis, as a proactive measure. In addition, California began releasing 100,000 sterile fruit flies per square mile every week. The area covered a 250 square mile region encompassing San Diego and the border. The purpose of the releases was to dilute the mating population of the Medfly and create a buffer between Mexico's fruit flies and California and Arizona's crops.

On November 9, 2004, APHIS eliminated some of the phytosanitary measures implemented to restrict the movement of Medfly host material in Tijuana into the US. Specifically, the requirements to cut fruit and seal shipments of host material moving through U.S. ports east of the San Luis checkpoint. Also, a phytosanitary certificate listing the origin (including municipality), with the following additional declaration that states the following: "The Medfly host material in this shipment was grown, packed, and stored outside the municipality of Tijuana in Baja California, Mexico."

On March 8, 2005, APHIS eliminated the phytosanitary certification requirements for Medfly host material moving through the following U.S. ports of entry: San Luis, Arizona, Calexico and Tecate, California.

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